

a second-tier electronic market providing a second participant, different from the first participant, access to the inventory of one or more items in the data repository, the inventory being offered to the second participant under a second pricing scheme different from the first pricing scheme.

47. The system of claim 46 wherein the first-tier electronic market comprises a business-to-consumer electronic market and the second-tier electronic market comprises a business-to-business electronic market.

3 48. The system of claim 46 wherein the first pricing scheme comprises retail pricing and the second pricing scheme comprises wholesale pricing.

4 49. The system of claim 46 wherein the second pricing scheme is transparent to the first participant.

5 50. The system of claim 46 wherein the second pricing scheme is unavailable to the first participant.

6 51. The system of claim 46 wherein the first pricing scheme is visible to the second participant.

7 52. The system of claim 46 wherein the inventory of one or more items comprises goods or services or both goods and services.

8 53. The system of claim 46 further comprising another inventory of items available only the second participant.

9 54. The system of claim 46 further comprising another inventory of items available only the first participant.

10 55. The system of claim 46 wherein the first participant comprises a retail buyer and

the second participant comprises a dealer.

11 <sup>10</sup> 56. The system of claim 55 wherein the dealer comprises a wholesaler.

12 <sup>1</sup> 57. The system of claim 46 further comprising a plurality of first participants, each of which is offered the inventory of one or more items under the first pricing scheme.

13 <sup>1</sup> 58. The system of claim 46 further comprising a plurality of second participants, each of which is offered the inventory of one or more items under the second pricing scheme.

2 [SUB E<sup>2</sup>] 59. The system of claim 46 wherein the first-tier electronic market and the second-tier electronic market share the data repository.

15 60. The system of claim 46 wherein the second participant can add, modify or delete items in the data repository and can specify the first pricing scheme, the second pricing scheme or both.

16 61. The system of claim 46 wherein the data repository comprises data records, each data record corresponding to an item in the inventory and specifying a first price for the item and a second price for the item.

17 <sup>18</sup> 62. The system of claim 61 wherein the first price comprises a business-to-consumer price and the second price comprises a business-to-business price.

SUB E<sup>3</sup> 63. The system of claim 46 wherein the second participant has privileges, unavailable to the first participant, that enable the second participant to access the second-tier electronic market.

19 64. The system of claim 46 wherein the second participant comprises a trusted dealer.

SUB E<sup>4</sup> 65. The system of claim 46 wherein the first-tier and second-tier electronic markets are implemented on a same computer system.

66. The system of claim 46 wherein the first-tier and second-tier electronic markets are implemented on separate computer systems interconnected by a network.

67. The system of claim 46 wherein the two-tiered electronic market system is implemented on a market maker computer system.

68. The system of claim 46 further comprising a process that determines whether a participant is granted access to the first-tier electronic market or the second-tier electronic market.

69. The system of claim 68 wherein the process comprises a login process that grants the participant access to the second-tier electronic market if the participant has been pre-approved.

70. The system of claim 69 wherein the login process determines that the participant is pre-approved to access the second-tier electronic market if the participant enters a predetermined login ID or password or both.

71. A computer-implemented method of facilitating commercial transactions by providing a two-tiered electronic market, the method comprising:

maintaining a first-tier electronic market at a market maker computer, the first electronic market comprising items offered to consumer participants under a retail pricing scheme;

maintaining a second-tier electronic market at the market maker computer, the second electronic market comprising items offered to dealer participants under a wholesale pricing scheme; and

linking the first-tier and second-tier electronic markets through a data repository

having data records that uniquely represent items concurrently available in both of the first-tier and second-tier electronic markets.

72. The method of claim 71 wherein linking the first-tier and second-tier electronic markets comprises storing in the data repository a predetermined fixed rate that determines a price differential between the first-tier and second-tier electronic markets.

73. The method of claim 72 wherein the predetermined price differential is established by one or more dealer participants in the second-tier electronic market.

74. The method of claim 71 wherein linking the first-tier and the second-tier electronic markets comprises storing in the data repository a price differential between the first-tier and the second-tier electronic markets, the price differential being established on an item-by-item basis by one or more dealer participants in the second-tier electronic market.

75. The method of claim 71 further comprising facilitating a financial transaction in the first-tier electronic market between a consumer participant and a dealer participant, the transaction having finality of transaction.

76. The method of claim 71 further comprising facilitating a financial transaction in the second-tier electronic market between a first dealer participant and another dealer participant, the transaction having finality of transaction.

77. The method of claim 71 further comprising facilitating a transaction in the first electronic market between a consumer participant and a dealer participant, the transaction transferring a legally cognizable interest from the dealer participant to the consumer participant.

78. The method of claim 71 further comprising facilitating a transaction in the second

electronic market between a first dealer participant and another dealer participant, the transaction transferring a legally cognizable interest from the first dealer participant to the other dealer participant.

79. The method of claim 71 further comprising:

receiving payment information from at least one participant in the first or second electronic market, the received payment information being associated with a transaction at the first or second electronic market;

processing the received payment information; and

transferring an ownership interest in an item to the at least one participant.

<sup>35</sup> 80. A method for facilitating electronic commerce using an electronic auction system having at least a wholesale tier and a retail tier, the method comprising:

presenting for auction an item description stored in a database operationally coupled to the electronic auction system, the presentation of the item including a current retail bid amount;

receiving a wholesale bid from at least one wholesale-tier participant; and  
selectively displacing the current retail bid amount if the received wholesale bid increased by a predetermined amount is greater than the current retail bid.

<sup>36</sup> 81. The method of claim <sup>35</sup> 80 further comprising presenting the received wholesale bid increased the predetermined amount as a new current retail bid amount.

<sup>37</sup> 82. The method of claim <sup>35</sup> 80 wherein the predetermined amount comprises a percentage of the wholesale bid amount.

<sup>38</sup> 83. The method of claim <sup>35</sup> 80 wherein the predetermined amount comprises a

percentage of the current retail bid amount.

39 84. The method of claim 80<sup>35</sup> wherein the predetermined amount comprises a fixed dollar amount.

40 85. The method of claim 80<sup>35</sup> wherein the predetermined amount is determined by a participant who offered the item for auction.

41 86. The method of claim 80<sup>35</sup> wherein wholesale-tier participants are presented with the current retail bid amount and with a current wholesale bid amount.

42 87. The method of claim 80<sup>35</sup> wherein received wholesale bids are transparent to retail-tier participants.

43 88. The method of claim 80<sup>35</sup> further comprising authorizing a wholesale-tier participant to access to the electronic auction using a verification process executing on a computer system.

44 89. The method of claim 80<sup>35</sup> wherein a verification process selectively grants access to the wholesale tier based on login information provided by a participant.

45 90. A system for facilitating electronic commerce transactions among participants over a data packet network, the system comprising:

a first data storage location for storing information describing an item for sale, the first data storage location including at least a retail price term for a retail-tier participant and a wholesale price term for a wholesale-tier participant;

a second data storage location for storing a user identification identifying a participant as either a retail-tier participant or a wholesale-tier participant; and

a display process for selectively displaying, depending on the user identification

[ stored in the second data storage location, the retail price term to retail-tier participants and at least the wholesale price term to wholesale-tier participants.

<sup>46</sup>/<sub>91</sub>. A two-tiered auction system comprising:

a retail tier in which a bid on an item from a retail auction participant is evaluated based on an amount of the bid received from the retail auction participant;

*Def.*  
a wholesale tier in which a bid on the item from a wholesale auction participant is evaluated based on an amount of the bid received from the wholesale auction participant increased by a predetermined amount; and

a process for differentiating retail auction participants from wholesale auction participants.

<sup>47</sup>/<sub>92</sub>. A method of conducting two-tiered auctions comprising treating received bids differently depending on whether the participant from whom a bid is received is a retail participant or a wholesale participant.

<sup>48</sup>/<sub>93</sub>. The method of claim <sup>47</sup>/<sub>92</sub> in which a bid received from a retail participant is evaluated based on an amount of the received bid.

<sup>49</sup>/<sub>94</sub>. The method of claim <sup>47</sup>/<sub>92</sub> in which a bid received from a wholesale participant is evaluated as if the received bid was for a higher amount.

<sup>50</sup>/<sub>95</sub>. The method of claim <sup>47</sup>/<sub>92</sub> in which, if a wholesale participant wins an auction, an amount owed by the wholesale participant is less than an amount of the wholesale participant's winning bid.--